

The Lazaretto
on the Delaware River
at Essington
Delaware County, Penna.

HABS No. PA -125

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PA
23-ESTO
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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Pennsylvania

HISTORICAL AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
Joseph P. Sims, District Officer
2008 Architects Building, Philadelphia, Penna.

23-ESTO
PA
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THE LAZARETTO
on the Delaware River at Essington
Delaware County, Pennsylvania

Owner:

Date of Erection: 1799 - 1800

Architect: Unknown

Present Condition: Dilapidated as no major repairs have been made since last used by the City of Philadelphia, in about 1880.

Number of Stories: Administration Building, three and one-half stories -
Wings, two and one-half stories.

Materials of Construction: Walls are of brick, laid in common running bond, every sixth course being a header course. The present roof is of tin, the present front porch evidently is of much later origin. All that is left of the interior woodwork is of contemporary design, with some fine elaborate mantels and some well designed but simple ones.

The main rooms throughout the first floor have chair rails and simple plaster cornices.

The floors are of wide, random width boards and the stair detail is exceedingly simple.

Some mantels have been removed but several still remain.

History: Following the Yellow Fever epidemic of 1793 in Philadelphia, a recurrence of the epidemic in 1797

showed that the methods of the Board of Health in dealing with infectious diseases were sadly lacking, with the result that the Board of Managers of "The Marine Hospital of the Port of Philadelphia" were empowered to act in the matter. In 1799, they bought a ten acre piece of ground on what was then Tinicum Island, and immediately began the erection of the buildings there, which were completed in 1800.

The main building was modeled after the Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia, and the wings were used for hospital purposes. The building was flanked on the right by the Physicians' residence (still standing) and on the left by that of the Quarantine Master (since demolished) both with their own stables. Two symmetrically placed Guard Houses (now stuccoed) on the banks of the river were used for lookouts for ships coming up the Delaware River to the Port of Philadelphia, for which this Hospital served for many years as the Quarantine Station.

Other smaller brick buildings between the main building and Tinicum Avenue exist, but for what purpose they were used is not now known.

The whole plan, when all the original buildings were still standing, must have formed a balanced and interesting scheme rarely found on this scale in groups of this period.

Bibliography: Scharf and Westcott's History of Philadelphia, Volume 2, page 1665, - History of Delaware County, page 283.

Additional Data: The Lazaretto, owned by the City of Philadelphia since 1799 has recently (1936) been sold to a private owner and its future is uncertain.

TW 8/27/27

Reduce to 8"x10 1/2"

Joseph P. Sims.

La Grange Ave.

Sketch of the Lazaretto Pa.
Trinicum Sup Delaware Pa
from Survey by E M Harris -
Scale 1"=50'

833'

210'

Approx 9 Acres -

Approx 2 1/2 Acres -

Delaware River

Essington Ave
2nd St

Pratt Ave

Lincoln Ave

Entrance Lane

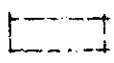
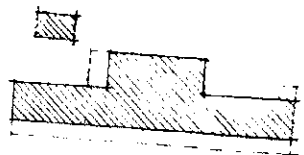
810'

220'

Now demolished

Now demolished

Now demolished.



Wall

475'